

## 2. Instructions and Application

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The *IAQ TFS* Connector describes the resources that EPA provides to promote interconnectedness and foster mutual assistance and support among the overall network of school IAQ and environmental health advocates, and *IAQ TFS* Program implementers. EPA's Connector resources include a listserv, e-newsletters, special events and other broad, national efforts to bring the *IAQ TFS* Network together as a community.

The National *IAQ TFS* Connector Award is designed to give national recognition to individuals and organizations whose actions and initiatives support improved school indoor environments in their community, state or region with a special focus on actions and initiatives that reflect the spirit of the *IAQ TFS* Connector. Examples include the following:

- Development of innovative initiatives, approaches, tools, or resources that have contributed to improved school indoor environments;
- Outstanding individuals and groups who have played a coordinating function to bring people or IAQ management programs together to provide mutual assistance and support in school IAQ management program implementation;
- Leadership/mentorship of school or school system IAQ management programs;
- Technical assistance in IAQ program implementation;
- Increasing student involvement in IAQ, such as integration of science clubs; and
- Other actions and initiatives that foster interconnectedness and mutual support and demonstrate results as part of these efforts.

For more illustrative examples, please read example profiles of National *IAQ TFS* Connector Award winners.

## Instructions

### Part 1: Contact Information

Please provide the information requested in the table in the National *IAQ TFS* Connector Award application.

### Part 2: Telling Your IAQ Story

To merit a National *IAQ TFS* Connector Award, applicants need to tell the story of how they have contributed to improved indoor environments in schools in their community, region or state. Your story should also include information on why you deserve national recognition for your efforts. Specifically, EPA will look for evidence that:

- The activities you are conducting to improve IAQ in schools are aligned with the *IAQ TFS* Program Approach and the critical components that lead to program effectiveness (i.e., the Six Key Drivers of School IAQ Program Success);



- The activities you are conducting reflect the spirit of the *IAQ TFS* Connector, the central communication and networking platform for the *IAQ TFS* Program, offering resources that foster mutual assistance and support in implementing IAQ management programs within the nationwide *IAQ TFS* Network;
- Evidence that the initiative is achieving results (e.g., number of workshops given, number of schools involved, and any data relating to outcomes seen in the schools implementing new IAQ management approaches, such as attendance rates, visits to the school nurse, etc.);
- Evidence that the activities could be replicable by others and/or that the program is sustainable; and
- An endorsement by someone (preferably someone in the school system or that works closely with the system) very familiar with the applicant's efforts and their impact.

## Writing Your Story

In no more than four pages, tell us the best story you can about your efforts to improve indoor air quality in schools. We recommend that you organize your story into the following sections:

- The *IAQ TFS* Program Approach and Framework (addresses evaluation criteria 1)
- Making Connections that Matter (addresses evaluation criteria 2)
- Capturing Success (addresses evaluation criteria 3)
- Replicating and Sustaining Success (addresses evaluation criteria 4)

### Tips on Writing an Effective Story:

- We strongly encourage you to review the *Envisioning Excellence* suite of materials available on the *IAQ TFS* Program Web site, [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/excellence.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/excellence.html), for more information on the six key drivers, and for in-depth case studies about exemplary indoor air quality programs.
- To help the Review Panel recognize the elements that you feel most contributed to your success, you may want to call attention to key themes, critical moments, and turning points, by calling out particularly powerful quotes from staff, school decision-makers, building occupants, or community members; highlighting key terms; or using headings in your text to call attention to specific information. To write an effective story, remember that it is important to demonstrate not only what you did, but how you did it and the effect of your actions.
- Carefully review the criteria that the Review Panel will use to evaluate your application. (Evaluation criteria may be found in the *IAQ TFS* Connector Award Application Process document at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/connectoraward.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/connectoraward.html)).



## Guiding Questions

*The below questions are designed to help you write your story by prompting you to think about critical moments in your work in IAQ, including key activities, accomplishments, and results. These questions are fully aligned with the evaluation criteria. Review the evaluation criteria to learn more about the details you should be sure to include in your story.*

### 2a. The IAQ TFS Program Approach and Framework

In this section, tell the story of how you became involved with IAQ in schools and how your activities align with the IAQ TFS Program Approach and Framework.

#### Questions to Consider:

1. Describe your initiative and activities. Consider important details such as how the initiative was designed, how it works, who it benefits, etc.
2. How did you get involved with your school or school system's IAQ program? Was there a natural connection between your role and the effort (e.g., the individual or organization is involved in implementing other environment or health programs in the school system; the individual sits on a school committee; etc.)? How long have you been involved with IAQ issues in general?
3. At what stage in the process of developing and/or implementing an IAQ management program did you get involved (e.g., initiating the process; joining the IAQ team in its early organizing stages)? How did your involvement help influence the process?
4. Which of the Key Drivers of effective school IAQ management do your activities support (i.e., Communicate, Organize, Assess, Plan, Act, or Evaluate)? For example, describe how you assisted with communicating IAQ activities to internal school audiences or the larger community. To review the Key Drivers, read the *Envisioning Excellence* suite of materials available on the IAQ TFS Program Web site, [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/excellence.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/excellence.html).

### 2b. Making Connections that Matter

In this section, tell the story of how you are conducting activities that reflect the spirit of the IAQ TFS Connector, the central communication and networking platform for the IAQ TFS Program, offering resources that foster mutual assistance and support in implementing IAQ management programs within the nationwide IAQ TFS Network.

#### Questions to Consider:

1. Describe what unique attributes, innovative initiatives, approaches, tools, or resources you brought into effect to contribute to IAQ success (e.g., your position in the school or community as a trusted leader on health issues).
2. Describe any role you have taken to expand the IAQ TFS Program or IAQ management beyond your immediate sphere of influence. Describe how your efforts brought groups or people together that would not have otherwise made a connection, and tell how this contributed to the success of the initiative.
3. Have you served as a mentor to other school systems? If so, how did you identify the need for your leadership? What assistance did you provide?



Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

**National IAQ TFS Connector Award**

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

## 2c. Capturing Success

In this section, tell the story of how you measured outcomes to demonstrate success.

### Questions to Consider:

1. Describe the most important contributions you have made to advancing IAQ management, either at the school system level or in a broader context.
2. What results have your efforts earned? Be as specific as possible, using numbers when available (e.g., number of workshops given, number of schools involved, and any data relating to outcomes seen in the schools implementing new IAQ management approaches, such as attendance rates, visits to the school nurse, etc.).

## 2d. Replicating and Sustaining Success

In this section, tell the story of how you envision sustaining the program and/or plan to assist others in replicating your activities for success in their own communities.

### Questions to Consider:

1. How have you contributed to sustaining the IAQ program, either within the school system or within the larger community?
2. Describe how your program is sustainable. What mechanisms are in place to keep the program going (e.g., funding, staffing, training, etc.)? Could your activities be replicated across the nation? What elements could most easily be replicated?

## Part 3: Endorsement

Applicants are required to submit one endorsement on their behalf in addition to the completed narrative. The recommendation should amount to no more than one additional page single-sided.

All application materials for the 2009 National *IAQ TFS* Connector Award must be received or postmarked by **September 30, 2009**, in order to be evaluated.



## Part 1: Contact Information

Please provide all of the information requested in the table below.

**The application is a fill-in form, which will allow you to type your answers directly into the form, save what you have filled in on your computer, and submit it electronically via e-mail.**

| Contact Information  |  |
|--|--|
| Name (Individual or Organization)  |  |
| Name of Key Contacts (if Organization)   |  |
| Title  |  |
| Department   |  |
| Address  |  |
| City, State, Zip Code  |  |
| Telephone  |  |
| Fax Number   |  |
| E-mail Address   |  |
| Contact Information of Person Providing Endorsement  |  |
| Name   |  |
| Title  |  |
| Organization   |  |
| E-mail Address   |  |
| Funding Source(s)  |  |
| Do you receive funding from EPA's Indoor Environments Division (IED) – headquarters or regional funds? If so please indicate which region or HQ. |  |
| If you receive EPA IED (headquarters or regional) funding, does your application include these activities?                                       |  |



Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

**National IAQ TfS Connector Award**

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

## Part 2: Telling Your IAQ Story

Use the Guiding Questions on page 2-4 in the Application Instructions to respond to each of the four following sections 2a-2d. Total page limit is four pages single-sided with a minimum of 11 point font.

### 2a. The IAQ TfS Program Approach and Framework

In this section, tell the story of how you became involved with IAQ in schools and how your activities align with the IAQ TfS Program Approach and Framework.



## 2b. Making Connections that Matter

In this section, tell the story of how you are conducting activities that reflect the spirit of the *IAQ TFS* Connector, offering resources that foster mutual assistance, and support in implementing IAQ management programs within the nationwide *IAQ TFS* Network.



*Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools*

**National IAQ TfS Connector Award**

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

## 2c. Capturing Success

In this section, tell the story of how you measured outcomes to demonstrate success.



## 2d. Replicating and Sustaining Success

In this section, tell the story of how you envision sustaining the program/or plan to assist others in replicating your activities for success in their own communities.



## Part 3: Endorsement

Applicants are required to submit one endorsement on their behalf in addition to the completed narrative. The recommendation should amount to no more than one additional page single-sided.

All application materials for the 2009 National *IAQ TFS* Connector Award must be postmarked by **September 30, 2009**, in order to be evaluated.